

AO 91 (Rev. 11/11) Criminal Complaint

United States Court
Southern District of Texas
FILED

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

JAN 27 2020

for the

Southern District of Texas

David J. Bradley, Clerk of Court

United States of America)

v.)

Case No.

C-20-304M

Jose Miguel ZUNIGA)

Defendant(s)

CRIMINAL COMPLAINT

I, the complainant in this case, state that the following is true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

On or about the date(s) of 1/24/2020 in the county of Nueces in the
Southern District of Texas, the defendant(s) violated:

Code Section

Offense Description

21 U.S.C § 841 (a) (1)

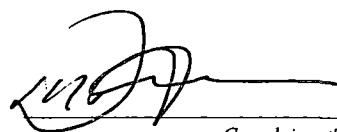
Knowingly, intentionally, and unlawfully
possess with intent to distribute a
controlled substance in Schedule II of
the Controlled Substance Act of 1970, to
wit: 5.34 kilograms of methamphetamine

This criminal complaint is based on these facts:

See Attachment A

☒ Continued on the attached sheet.

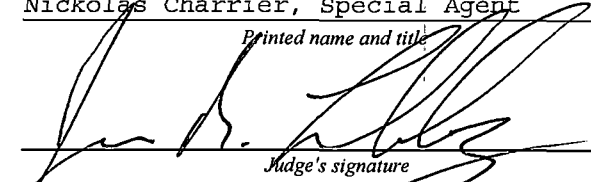
Sworn to before me and signed in my presence.

Date: January 27, 2020City and state: Corpus Christi, TX

Complainant's signature

Nickolas Charrier, Special Agent

Printed name and title



Judge's signature

Jason B. Libby, US Magistrate Judge

Printed name and title

ZUNIGA, Jose Miguel

ATTACHMENT "A"

On January 23, 2020, Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) Special Agent (SA) Nickolas Charrier and Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) Criminal Investigation Division (CID) SA Jeffrey Smithwick received information from a Source of Information, hereinafter referred to "SOI" that a shipment of methamphetamine from Mexico would be delivered to Jose Miguel ZUNIGA in Corpus Christi, Texas.

On that same date, DEA and DPS established surveillance on ZUNIGA where ZUNIGA was located at a business called Grecia's Party Room, in Corpus Christi, Texas. ZUNIGA was spotted outside the bar. ZUNIGA appeared to be waiting for someone. At approximately 7:23pm, agents saw a Chevrolet Suburban arrive at the location. The Suburban was registered out of Eagle Pass, Texas. Agents saw the driver, hereinafter referred to as HM1, get out of the vehicle and retrieve one or two buckets from the back of the Suburban and carry them into Grecia's Party Room. Agents know from recent seizures in the Corpus Christi area that one common method of shipment of liquid methamphetamine is inside paint buckets. The size of the buckets carried into the bar appeared to be 5 gallon size paint buckets. A short time after this, agents and officers observed ZUNIGA's known vehicle depart from the area and drive directly to a location in Corpus Christi, Texas, which agents and officers know from SOI to be a location that ZUNIGA stores illegal drugs.

After the Suburban left the bar, Officers traffic stopped the Suburban for an equipment violation. It was operated HM1. HM1 gave officers consent to search the vehicle and officers found two (2) bundles of a large amount of U.S. currency wrapped in clear cellophane. HM1 was detained and transported to DPS CID for interview and processing. Texas DPS CID Agent Smithwick issued Miranda Warnings to HM1, which HM1 acknowledged by signing a Miranda Warnings document. HM1 was asked about the buckets he brought into the bar. HM1 denied bringing any buckets into the bar. HM1 stated that he was hired by an individual located in Piedras Negras, Mexico, to drive to Corpus Christi, Texas, to retrieve a large amount of money from an address there. HM1 would be paid a percentage of the money he retrieved, which he was told would be approximately \$45,000.

HM1 stated that he did not know what the money was from, but believed it was likely from illegal activity. HM1 was supposed to deliver the money to an individual in Eagle Pass, Texas, and believed the money would then make its way back to the individual in Piedras Negras, Mexico.

On January 24, 2020, DEA obtained Federal Search Warrants for ZUNIGA's drug storage residence, as well as ZUNIGA's personal residence, both located in Corpus Christi, Texas. At the drug storage residence, agents and officers located approximately ten (10) bundles of methamphetamine that were concealed inside a speaker box located in the trunk of a white 1998 Chevrolet 2-door vehicle registered to ZUNIGA's wife.

Before agents were able to execute the search warrant at ZUNIGA's personal residence, agents saw ZUNIGA leave his residence in his vehicle at a high rate of speed as if fleeing from someone. ZUNIGA drove through stop signs and drove erratically, almost striking a citizen as he left the area. Agents chose not to pursue ZUNIGA due to his unsafe driving, for fear that someone may be hurt.

Agents spoke with ZUNIGA on the phone after the execution of the search warrant at ZUNIGA's drug storage residence. Agents did not tell ZUNIGA anything about what was found at that address; however, ZUNIGA told agents that the agents needed to guarantee that he would get a bond if arrested, because he would be dead because of this. Agents told ZUNIGA that he needed to return to his residence, but ZUNIGA did not do so.

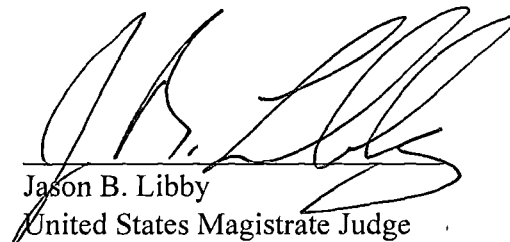
Agents and officers then executed the search warrant at ZUNIGA's personal residence. Agents and officers located two (2) loaded hand guns, two (2) police scanner radios (one of which was on and actively tuned to the Corpus Christi Police Department Gang Task Force channel to listen to law enforcement communications in real time) and multiple drug ledgers. ZUNIGA is a convicted felon, and currently on federal supervised release for the offense of possession with intent to distribute heroin, in cause number C-13-646 in the Corpus Christi Division of the Southern District of Texas.

Assistant United States Attorney Michael Hess accepted the federal prosecution of Jose Miguel ZUNIGA. The amount of methamphetamine recovered (5.34 kilograms, approximate gross weight), as well as the weapons and drug ledgers, lead agents to believe that ZUNIGA intended to distribute the methamphetamine.



Nickolas Charrier, Special Agent
Drug Enforcement Administration

Sworn to before me and signed in my presence.



Jason B. Libby
United States Magistrate Judge